

Seek Learning

Grades 4–12

Objective

Students will strengthen journalism and reporting skills—including empathy, speaking, listening, and writing skills—by interviewing family or community members. Students will use an art form of their choice to express the main ideas from their interviews.

Materials — [Worksheets available on Google Slides](#)

- “Seek Learning” worksheets
- “Self-Reflection” worksheet (optional)

Class Activity

1. If you haven’t already, review the “[Welcome to the Skirball](#)” introduction, which features collection items that relate to this lesson, as well as information about the Skirball and its permanent exhibition, *Visions and Values: Jewish Life from Antiquity to America*.
2. Discuss the value of passing down stories and personal experiences.
3. Ask students to think of someone significant in their lives whom they would like to learn from and interview in person or virtually.

Student Instructions

Use the “Seek Learning” worksheets to prepare for, conduct, and record your own interview with someone significant in your life. You may conduct your interview in person or virtually.

Following your interview, decide what art form you want to use to express the main ideas from your interview to the class. You could make a poster, sculpture, short film, recording, or presentation. It’s up to you!

Share Out

Create a classroom gallery or presentation of student work that represents the stories and interviews the students conducted.

Curriculum Connections

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA: SL.1, 3, 5; W.2, 3, 4, 7

California Arts Standards: VA:Cr1.1, VA:Cr2.1, VA:Cn10

Resources

Resources for Interviewing

For inspiration on how to prepare for and conduct an interview, check out the organization [**StoryCorps**](#). The following StoryCorps guides are particularly helpful for this lesson:

- [“Tips for a Great Conversation.”](#)
- [“Great Questions.”](#)
- [“Lesson: Tips for Effective Interviews.”](#)

Learn from fellow students who interview community members by checking out the YouTube video [“Tell Me Your Story - Interviewing Tips for Kids.”](#) (running time: 9:57).

Resources to Inspire Your Art-Making

See how artist Stephanie Mercado used interviews with seven people to create [a series of posters](#) for the installation [Sustain: From Loss to Renewal](#) at the **Skirball Cultural Center**. The portraits spotlight members of Los Angeles’s essential workforce and tell the stories of their pandemic experiences.

Be inspired by the artwork and words of Asian American students across the country in [“Student Voices,”](#) produced by the news organization **Chalkbeat**.

Check out [Youth Radio](#), a national network of young journalists and artists who collaborate with peers and top media professionals across the country to create impactful content.

Connect with Us

Our educators are here to help! If you have questions about this curriculum or would like to share your students’ writing or artwork with us, please email teacherprograms@skirball.org.

Seek Learning

We can **seek learning** in various ways—through research, reading, the tradition of oral storytelling, and conversations with others. When someone tells their story, they become a narrator. Listening to them allows us to deepen our understanding of their perspectives and empathize with their lived experiences.

Think of someone meaningful in your life whom you would like to learn more about. Ask them the following questions, record their stories, and find connections between their responses and your life.

Interviewer

(Your Name)

Interviewee

(Name of the Person You Are Learning From)

- Share three dates that are significant to you. Why are these dates important? These dates could be birthdays, anniversaries, significant holidays, or special occasions.
- Share three geographic locations that are important to you. Why are these places meaningful? These may be where you or your family members have lived, places you regularly go, or where you've traveled or want to visit.
- Describe three objects that are meaningful to you. These could be everyday objects, favorite recipes, religious items, or objects related to special occasions. You might include details about their colors, sounds, textures, or scents. Why are these objects significant? What traditions or memories do they represent?

Name:

Seek Learning

After your interview, reflect on the following:

1. What is one new thing you learned?
2. What do you still wonder about?
3. What experiences or values do you share with the person you interviewed?

It's time to get creative!

Decide what art form you want to use to express the main ideas from your interview to the class. You could make a poster, sculpture, short film, recording, or presentation. It's up to you!

Add an artist statement.

Write a one-paragraph description of how your artwork represents the person you interviewed or their story. You might start by using the sentence frames below:

- Through the story I heard from [insert the interviewee's name], I learned ...
- My artwork represents ...

Name:

Self-Reflection

Reflect on your experience with the activity you completed and share what you learned about yourself, your values, your traditions, or your community.

Three things I learned about myself:

Two things I learned from hearing someone else's story:

One thing I am curious to learn more about:

My greatest challenge with this activity was:

After completing the activity, I am most proud of:

A lasting impact I hope to have on my community is: